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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
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April 23, 2004

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Officer

Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.
Director of Public Health and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **OPERATION OF BATHHOUSES AND OTHER VENUES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY WITH HIGH RISK BEHAVIOR AMONG MSM**

On February 3, 2004, the Board approved a motion by Supervisor Yaroslavsky, directing the Department of Health Services and County Counsel to report to the Board within 90 days on the operation of bathhouses and other venues in Los Angeles County at which high risk behavior occurs among men who have sex with men. This is a status report on that motion.

Department staff held a meeting with HIV prevention providers and another meeting with the owners/managers of the bathhouses and other venues, to solicit input on the issue. The Department has met with County Counsel to discuss legal options. The Department also met with the Los Angeles City AIDS Coordinator and a representative of the City Attorney, to discuss the issues, since most of the facilities are in the City of Los Angeles.

We have developed a draft set of recommendations and guidelines, but are still reviewing several key issues. The process has taken longer than projected because of the complex set of issues involved. As soon as the draft recommendations and guidelines are set, it is our plan to meet again with the community prevention providers and with the owners/managers to get their final input prior to finalizing the documents for consideration by the Board.

We will provide you with a further update in 30 days.

TLG:JEF:lm
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c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors